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STATE PASS TO AID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON U.S. DECISION REGARDING
JERUSALEM

Summary

-- Lead stories in all Arabic dailies today, October 2, carry wire service reports highlighting President Bush's signature of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY03, which includes a "Jerusalem provision" that calls on the United States to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's "undivided and eternal capital". One paper's headline announced "New American Balfour Declaration" (Al-Aswaq); while the headline in high-circulation, semi-official Al Ra'i's read: "Bush signs Congressional decision to consider Jerusalem as Israel's capital". Mass-appeal, independent daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm characterized the signing as being the result of "a deal between the Congress and the White House that opens the door for a decision to strike Iraq." Majority of editorial commentaries today strongly criticize the U.S. action as "extremely provocative" and as a "blow" to international legitimacy and "disrespect" to the Muslim and Arab world.

Editorial Commentary

-- "A very provocative American law"

Center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (10/02) editorializes: "The law that was submitted by Congress and signed by the President considering Jerusalem as Israel's capital represents the biggest and most dangerous defiance of the Arab and Muslim world. This law is, without a doubt, a huge blow to the already fledgling peace process. It also weakens even more the credibility of the American mediator, who is well known for his blind bias in favor of the Israeli viewpoint. Most of all, it is a sign of disrespect and humiliation to all Muslims around the world. We urge the Arab and Muslim world, on all levels, to express their anger at this law that is a stab in the back of more than one billion Muslims."

-- "America hates the Arabs and not the other way around"

Daily columnist Musa Hawamdeh writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (10/02): "The latest American decision that considers Jerusalem as Israel's capital completely destroys U.S. credibility as far as the Arab-Israeli conflict is concerned. The American decision is a reward for the occupation and for Sharon's massacres and bloodshed. America has exposed its true nature of its intentions towards the Palestinians and the Arabs. This poses the question: why do they (the Americans) hate us (Arabs)?"

-- "The U.S. is a party in the religious struggle over Jerusalem"

Daily columnist Bater Wardam writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (10/02): "It is clear that the Zionist U.S. Congress wants to get the U.S. administration involved in a long struggle with the Muslim world by imposing the Jerusalem provision in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act. The requirement now is an Arab and Muslim political campaign that rises up to the level of this provocation. It is the responsibility of the Arab and Muslim official authorities to respond to this defiance, otherwise, the Muslim people and the non-official organizations will respond, and we all know how their response would be. Before Arab and Muslim regimes start to criticize terrorism and declare their readiness to combat it, they should adopt a stand against this rude American provocation

that shows, once more, the America's insolence towards the Muslim world."

-- "The American Knesset"

Columnist Rashad Abu Daoud writes on the back page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (10/02): "Politically speaking, the law recognizing Jerusalem as Israel capital is a declaration changing the Palestinian and Middle East issue as a whole from a regional military and political struggle into a religious cause. It also changes the issue from being an issue that has to do with three million Palestinians to a declaration of war against a billion Muslim around the world."

GNEHM